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COURT NEWS

Courts Enhance Collection of Fees, Fines

SCOTT BURRITT
BLAINE CORREN

At its August 27 meeting, the Judicial Council approved a series of recommendations for improving the collection of court-ordered fines, fees, forfeitures, and penalties. This action is the judicial branch's latest step to improve the management of court-ordered debt and enhance respect for the rule of law.

"A new and improved statewide system of collections will promote respect for our justice system and will ensure that court orders are enforced," says Chief Justice Ronald M. George, Chair of the Judicial Council. "Allowing court orders and penalties to be ignored diminishes the public's respect for the rule of law."

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations were part of the *Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections Report*. The report contains guidelines and standards for court-county collections teams to use as a road map in creating or enhancing their collections programs.

The working group proposed that the Judicial Council:

- Sponsor legislation that would allow courts (in addition to counties) to charge a fee for setting up installment payments;
- Review the feasibility of charging interest on delinquent fees and fines;
- Direct the trial courts, in collaboration with their counties, to enter into written memoranda of understanding and establish countywide enhanced

collections and compliance coordination committees;

- Decline to make an amnesty program part of a comprehensive collections program; and
- Establish a task force, under the direction of the Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections, to develop standards and guidelines to assist judicial officers and staff in the approval or denial of fee waivers.

WORKING GROUP

Senate Bill 940, which became law in September 2003, required the Judicial Council to adopt guidelines for the collection of fees, fines, forfeitures, penalties, and assessments imposed by the courts. The legislation also called for the council to establish a working group to evaluate and make recommen-



A report from the Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections proposes guidelines and standards for court collections. One recommendation is to review the feasibility of charging interest on delinquent fees and fines. Photo: Jason Doiy

dations concerning current and future collection methods.

The Judicial Council, in collaboration with the California State Association of Counties,

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Judicial Branch Budget

Courts Gain Stability, Funding

CHRISTINE M. HANSEN
DIRECTOR, FINANCE DIVISION,
AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE
COURTS

The State Budget Act of 2004, signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on July 31, enacted significant systemic changes that will improve the stability and predictability of funding for the courts. The budget also includes sorely needed funding to cover the increased costs of court operations.

HISTORIC COURT BUDGET REFORM

Included in this year's budget trailer bill legislation (Sen. Bill 1102) are provisions that are expected to result in major improvements in the way trial court funding is adjusted from one fiscal year to the next.

Beginning in fiscal year 2005-2006, the State Appropriations Limit (SAL) will be used for the first time to determine the base funding adjustment for trial court operating costs. This critical change will simplify the budget development process and assist us in protecting courts' baseline budgets from erosion.

The annual percentage change in the SAL will be calculated in the spring and will be applied to the total trial court baseline budget. It is based on factors such as changes in population and the cost of living.

Increases in funding for security, court-appointed counsel, employee salaries, retirement, health care, and interpreters, as well as increases in court operating budgets that previously necessitated the submission of budget change proposals (BCPs) to the state Department of Finance, will now be funded within the SAL appropriation increase. However, the branch will still be able to submit BCPs when extraordinary costs cannot be absorbed by the annual SAL percentage increase or when new statutory mandates affecting the courts necessitate it.

We will need to work closely with the Governor, the Legislature, and the state Department of Finance to ensure that this legislation is implemented in a manner that achieves its intent and promise. To that end, we will continue to meet with these representatives. We have convened a judicial branch budget working group made up of presiding judges and court executives to help resolve any implementation details.

TRIAL COURT FUNDING INCREASED

The judicial branch was directed to make unallocated reductions (which means that the areas of the reductions are not specified), as it has been each year since the beginning of the recession in fiscal year 2001-2002. This year's

final budget included an unallocated reduction total (\$75 million) lower than that in last year's budget (\$85 million). However, approximately \$20 million of this year's reduction is permanent and therefore will not be restored to the baseline at the end of the current fiscal year.

In addition, available statewide funding was used to further reduce the total unallocated reductions for all courts to an amount just over \$46 million. To achieve this, the council approved one-time use of reserve funds in 19 trial courts to reduce the impact of reductions on a statewide basis. Also for the first time, allocations were not made strictly on a prorated basis; instead, the council voted to manage the budget reductions by considering a variety of factors that include case filings and adjusted base funding.

On the plus side, this year's final budget contains new funding of \$85.455 million for negotiated salary increases and benefits for court staff, including commissioners and referees; retirement costs; judges' salary and benefit increases (granted in fiscal year 2003-2004 and previously unfunded); security; court interpreters; homicide trials; prisoner hearings; and increased charges for county-provided services. The Governor's January budget proposal for the state

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Christine M. Hansen

San Diego Homeless Court: A National Model

The Superior Court of San Diego County's Homeless Court Program enables homeless defendants to clear up minor infractions and misdemeanors without going to a courthouse or risking arrest. The program was named a finalist in the 2004 Innovations in Government Awards.

See page 8 for more on this homeless court program that is building a vulnerable population's trust and confidence in the legal system.



Chief Justice
Ronald M.
George

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUSTICE

Chief Justices Work to Improve Court Administration

As outgoing president of the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ), California Chief Justice Ronald M. George delivered a progress report to CCJ members at their annual meeting on July 26 in Salt Lake City. During his one-year term as president of CCJ, Chief Justice George also served as chair of the board of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). In his address he reflected on some of the accomplishments of state courts during his term. Following is an edited excerpt from that address.

When I was asked to speak about my reflections over the past year as president, I went back and reviewed the goals that I set last August in Puerto Rico, when I took the reins as president. At that time, I described five major goals.

EDUCATION

The first goal was to enhance the educational programs at both the midyear and annual meetings and to provide more interactive programs that focus on the day-to-day problems and issues that face state courts. I can say unequivocally that we have met this goal, due in no small part to Chief Justice Christine Durham's great efforts as chair of the Education Committee.

At both the midyear and annual meetings, there were excellent sessions on judicial governance and accountability, leadership and management strategies, and ensuring independence through greater accountability. These and other educational programs focused on preserving the third branch, especially during the difficult economic times that we are all facing.

I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for the judicial branch to exert strong leadership and to responsibly govern itself; we certainly have learned that in California. As a separate branch of government, state judiciaries must demonstrate that we are capable of doing so. The Chief Justices and court administrators of every state must step forward to take on this responsibility, or risk the possibility that the legislature or executive branch will take it upon themselves. The educational programs provided during the past year have not only stressed the importance of taking on this duty, but also provided the tools and strategies to enable us to move forward and truly serve as the leaders of the third branch.

COMMITTEE WORK

The second goal that I put forward last year related to examining the committee structure of CCJ in order to eliminate committees and liaison assignments that no longer served a purpose, and to continue or expand the committees and meetings that successfully further the mission of CCJ.

As a result, during the last year, we eliminated the State-Federal Relations Committee because its work is duplicated by other committees, and declined several requests from other organizations to appoint a CCJ member as liaison to committees or projects that were related to our work only tangentially. We also continued the regional meetings for Chief Justices at both the midyear and annual meetings. These sessions have been very well received and are considered beneficial by our members. In the area of access and fairness, I was particularly pleased that we co-sponsored the 2004 National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts conference in Washington, D.C., this year.

GREATER MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Another goal that I set for CCJ was to encourage and cultivate involvement in our work by the Chief Justices from every state, territory, and commonwealth of the United States. I was pleased that more than 40 members attended the midyear meeting in San Francisco, and 44 Chief Justices are present at this annual meeting.

To encourage greater participation and to provide unique and useful assistance, I have appointed seven mentors for new Chief Justices in our midst. I am confident that the enthusiasm of the mentors will result in a heightened commitment to CCJ and its efforts on the part of the new Chiefs. On Sunday we held a very successful orientation luncheon for new Chief Justices, which seven new Chiefs attended.

As Chief Justices and state court administrators become more aware of the benefits of being a member of

CCJ and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA)—particularly as more states use the excellent resources of the National Center for State Courts—involvement undoubtedly will increase. Useful resources provided by NCSC, such as the paper on the *Blakely* decision that we received, as well as the COSCA white papers discussing current issues, provide concrete benefits to every state court and demonstrate the value of increased involvement.

DEVELOPING CONSTITUENCIES

I also am very pleased we have made substantial progress in developing constituencies outside the judicial community to advocate for needed court reforms and to protect the resources required to provide adequate public access to the courts. This past year, both the Lawyers Committee and the General Counsel Committee of the National Center have played a major role in garnering the support of the bar community and the private sector for the judiciary.

I anticipate that these efforts will continue to grow. Under the guidance of Hank Barnette as chair of the General Counsel Committee and Ron Olson as chair of the Lawyers Committee, great strides have been made to develop an informed and helpful public constituency.

ENHANCING BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETINGS

My final stated goal was to enhance the business portion of the meeting and to encourage members to remain at the conferences for the business meetings, which typically take up the last day. The Annual Meeting Oversight Committee, a joint committee with COSCA, recommended a shortened meeting schedule from Sunday to Wednesday, which was tried at the San Francisco midyear meeting. A reduced annual meeting schedule will be instituted on an experimental basis in 2005. I hope that the new format results in increased participation at the business meetings.

In short, I am very pleased that we have achieved so much over the past year—and very grateful for the assistance of so many others who have moved us toward these goals: Chief Justices, court administrators, NCSC and other staff, and bar leaders.

LEGISLATION

We also have had a very successful year legislatively.

- **Class actions** CCJ opposed proposed legislation to remove to federal courts class actions and mass torts that have “minimal diversity.” After considerable activity in the Senate, a motion for cloture failed on July 8, and this bill probably is dead for this year.

- **Victims' rights constitutional amendment** CCJ opposed a constitutional amendment that would have addressed victims' rights in both state and federal courts. CCJ worked with a consortium of concerned organizations and senators for the passage of an alternative statutory version that applies only to victims of federal crimes.

- **Offset of federal tax returns** The NCSC Government Affairs Office has been working with several CCJ and COSCA members to seek a sponsor for legislation that would assist state courts in collecting debts through the offset of federal tax returns. Progress is being made, and a Ways and Means Committee member has agreed to carry the proposal in the House. This would provide a tremendous tool for states to use in at least partially addressing funding issues.

Finally, I again would like to thank Shirley Abrahamson, Dan Becker, Larry Myers, and the other members of the NCSC search committee for their herculean work in finding a new president for the National Center. Between December and March, they met numerous times in D.C., Chicago, San Francisco, and probably other places to draft a job description, interview and select search firms, determine ways to reach the best pool of applicants, screen applicants, and of course interview and reinterview candidates before making a final recommendation to the board on April 16.

These efforts certainly paid off handsomely. We all are very pleased that Mary McQueen is taking over the leadership of the National Center. I know that she will continue the good work and fine leadership that Roger Warren has provided during the past eight years.

Judicial Council Action

Council Agrees to Seek New Judgeships

At its August 27 business meeting, the Judicial Council voted to seek legislation and funding to add 150 new judgeships to the California trial courts over the next three years.

In keeping with the recommendations in the council's 2001 study of statewide judgeship needs, the methodology for assessing the need for judicial officers incorporates quantitative and qualitative factors to arrive at workload standards for 19 case types. These workload standards are then multiplied by the number of filings by case type to arrive at the total judicial workload for each court.

The total workload in a particular court is then divided by the “standard” amount of time per year each judicial officer has available to complete case-related work. This calculation provides an estimate of the number of judicial officers needed in every court, and in the state as a whole, to resolve the number of cases filed. In addition, the council approved a modification in the methodology for evaluating judgeship needs: a three-year average of yearly filings will be used in place of statistics from a single year.

Staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts are contacting the courts identified for receipt of new judgeships in fiscal year 2005–2006 to confirm their needs and their ability to provide or acquire space for the positions.

OTHER ACTIONS

In other actions, the council:

Court Collections Approved preliminary statewide guidelines and standards for enhancing trial court collections and paved the way for further study of improved collection methods by a statewide working group representing all three branches of government. The

actions result from Senate Bill 940 (Escutia), Judicial Council-sponsored legislation that requires the council, among other things, to adopt comprehensive collections standards for all statewide trial courts and counties. (See story on page 1.)

Appellate Rules Approved the fourth and final installment of the Appellate Advisory Committee's multiyear project to revise the appellate rules of the California Rules of Court. Chaired by California Supreme Court Justice Joyce L. Kennard, the committee revised rules governing: appeals and writs in juvenile cases, miscellaneous other appeals, general appellate procedures, original

proceedings in reviewing courts, administration of reviewing courts, and publication of appellate opinions. The final installment of the revised rules is effective January 1, 2005.

Budget Reimbursements Approved new criteria for reimbursement of Trial Court Trust Fund reserves to trial courts that incurred reserve reductions in fiscal year 2004–2005, to partially offset a statewide unallocated reduction in funds for courts. The criteria specify conditions for the reimbursement of up to 50 percent of the amount of the reserve reduction at each court. No reimbursements would be provided after June 30, 2009.

Trial Court Budget Directed the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to develop budget change proposals for the trial courts for employee salaries, benefits, retirement, and increased county charges, to address partially unfunded baseline costs in the current fiscal

year (2004–2005) and identify ongoing funding deficiencies. In addition, the council directed the AOC to develop a budget package that applies the estimated State Appropriations Limit adjustment rate to the overall trial court base funding.

Budget Change Proposals Approved fiscal year 2005–2006 budget change proposals for the California Supreme Court, California Judicial Center Library, Courts of Appeal, and Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts. These include proposals that would fund audits, labor and employee relations assistance for the courts, and reimbursements for statewide administrative infrastructure and information technology work in the courts. The council also approved a budget change proposal to support the continued implementation of the Trial Court Facilities Act. ■

and statewide issues related to judicial assignments. Topics discussed have included judicial coverage, training needs and requirements of assigned judges, resource and budget issues, and case management concerns.

“We also want to ensure that the courts are kept apprised of our available pool of judges, the most challenging case types to fill, and judge evaluation issues,” says Brad Campbell, staff to the Assigned Judges Program.

● For more information or to schedule a visit with the Assigned Judges Program staff, contact Brad Campbell, 415-865-7638; e-mail: brad.campbell@jud.ca.gov. ■

**Listen to
Council
Meetings
Live, View
Reports
Online**

Reports and materials to be discussed by the Judicial Council at its business meetings are now available prior to each meeting as links in the agenda posted on the California Courts Web site at **www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/**. Council meetings are audiocast live and archived at the same Web address.

In addition, archives of reports to the council on proposals for new and amended California Rules of Court, standards of judicial administration, Judicial Council jury instructions, and Judicial Council forms can be found at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/rules/reports/ and www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms/reports/.

Appellate and Trial Court Services

Courts Hear About Assigned Judges Program

PAULA BOCCIARDI

Staff members from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) are visiting courts to provide updates and discuss the Assigned Judges Program. This program assists the Chief Justice in assigning active and retired judges to the appellate and trial courts in response to vacancies, illnesses, disqualifications, or workload issues.

"It is always a pleasure to be able to put a face with the helpful voices we deal with so often over the telephone," says Mary Beth Todd, Executive Officer of the Superior Court of Calaveras County. "Of special interest was learning about the work of the Assigned Judges Advisory Committee and the many issues it is reviewing. We also had the opportunity to discuss issues unique

to our court and how we can best work with the Assignments Unit staff to see that our assignment needs are met.”

Beginning in March of this year, Assigned Judges Program staff from the AOC's Appellate and Trial Court Judicial Services have conducted 16 site visits in coordination with the AOC regional offices. Presiding judges, executive officers, and other court staff have had an opportunity to discuss emerging local

Supreme Court Releases Workload Statistics

The California Supreme Court released its annual workload statistics for the period from September 1, 2003, through August 31, 2004. Overall, the numbers of filings and dispositions in 2003–2004 were similar to the totals in the previous year.

Opinions Filed The court filed opinions in 116 cases—2 more opinions than were filed in 2002–2003. Of the court’s 116 opinions, 53 involved civil cases, 46 involved noncapital criminal cases, 14 involved automatic appeals arising from judgments of death, and 3 involved habeas corpus petitions related to death penalty judgments.

Habeas Corpus Actions The court acted on 37 petitions for writ of habeas corpus related to death penalty judgments, issuing orders to show cause on 4 petitions and issuing orders denying 33 petitions. This compares to 22 petitions for writ of habeas corpus handled by the court last year, including 2 in which an order to show cause issued.

Petitions for Review The court considered approximately 8,500 petitions for review, petitions in original proceedings, and actions arising out of State Bar Court disciplinary proceedings—fewer than the almost 9,000 such matters considered in 2002–2003.

Depublished Opinions The court ordered 25 Court of Appeal opinions depublished, compared to 13 in 2002–2003 and 25 in 2001–2002. From totals that regularly exceeded 100 per year in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the number of opinions ordered depublished has declined to 25 or fewer per year in the last several years.

Published Opinions The court ordered five Court of Appeal opinions published, compared to one case ordered published during 2002–2003.

● For more information, visit the California Courts Online Press Center at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/presscenter/newsreleases/NR45-04.htm, or visit the Supreme Court's Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/supreme/.

Enhancing Branchwide Communications

In a branchwide collaboration, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the courts are developing the first Branchwide Communication Plan. An initial draft of the plan, containing protocols and procedures for increasing and improving communication within the judicial branch, will be distributed to court leaders and judges in October for their review and comment.

The plan will identify the tools necessary to ensure timely and accurate exchanges of information among the council, its

advisory committees, the AOC, and the courts.

The Branchwide Communications Workgroup—which consists of judges, court executive officers, and AOC directors and staff—is guiding the planning efforts.

● For more information on the Branchwide Communication Plan, visit <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/oc/>, or contact the AOC Office of Communications, 415-865-7740; e-mail: pubinfo@jud.ca.gov. ■

In the News

Judges Get Tough On Jury Evaders

An Associated Press article that appeared in the September 8 edition of the *Los Angeles Daily Journal, Daily News* (Los Angeles), and other publications described the efforts of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County to increase its jury pools by fining no-shows and by dedicating courtrooms around the county to holding sanction hearings for citizens who refuse to fulfill their jury service.

The story, "Jury Summons Is an Often-Ignored Obligation," reported that the court has been ordering citizens who ignored a jury summons to come before a judge and explain their failure to appear for jury service. Those who also duck this special appearance are fined, but the penalties are dropped if they fulfill their jury service. The article noted that the Los Angeles court sent out 2.9 million jury summonses last fiscal year and received on-time responses to just 25 percent of them.

The story mentions that, until two years ago, the sanction hearings were held solely at the main courthouse in downtown Los Angeles. The court is now rotating its sanction hearings among multiple court locations in the county in an effort to publicize its firm stance on jury service evaders.

The Associated Press article is one of many stories in the media that are conveying to the community the court's message about the importance of jury service. Some other articles that have appeared recently are: **'Ignore Notice for Jury Duty, Face Jail Time,'** *Grunion Gazette* (Long Beach), September 2, 2004; **'Judge to Get Tough on Jury Duty Shirkers,'** *Antelope Valley Press* (Palm-dale), July 5, 2004; **'Jury Service No-Shows Get the Word: No Excuses,'** *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 2004; **'People Who Ignore Jury Summons Will Face Court,'** *Valley Sun* (San Fernando), June 10, 2004; **'Doing Our Duty,'** *Daily News* (Los Angeles), June 5, 2004; **'County Cracks Down on Jury Duty Evaders,'** *Daily News* (Woodland Hills), June 4, 2004.

Other courts in the news:

'Court of Appeal to Host Moot Court Competition,' *Metropolitan News-Enterprise* (Los Angeles), July 21, 2004

Highlighted a program hosted by the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six, that featured local law students participating in mock appellate proceedings.

'County Changes Selection Process,' *Lompoc Record*, July 15, 2004; **'S.B. County Will Scrap Two-Step Method,'** *Santa Maria Times*, July 15, 2004; **'New Rules to Make Jury Duty Harder to Dodge,'** *Santa Barbara News Press*, July 15, 2004

Reported that the Superior Court of Santa Barbara County would switch to a one-step juror summons process that would allow the court to send a questionnaire and summons at the same time, with the goal of improving the diversity among those called for duty.

'In Court, a Refuge Where Children Play,' *Recorder* (San Francisco), July 6, 2004; **'Hayward Courthouse Opens Children's Waiting Room,'** *Oakland Tribune*, July 5, 2004

Announced the opening of the Superior Court of Alameda County's children's waiting room at the Hall of Justice in Hayward.

'Program Makes Restraining Order Process Easier,' *Tulare Advance-Register*, July 5, 2004

Spotlighted I-CAN (the Interactive Community Assistance Network) and described how the online service is making it easier for domestic abuse victims in Tulare County to obtain restraining orders.

'Revamped Court for Kids Ready,' *Daily News* (Woodland Hills), July 1, 2004

Announced that the Lancaster courthouse was renovated to handle juvenile cases and was renamed the Alfred J. McCartney Juvenile Justice Center.

'Court Program for Mentally Ill Coming to End,' *Chico Enterprise Record*, July 1, 2004

Detailed the final session of the Superior Court of Butte County's mental health court in Oroville, which had to be terminated due to a lack of funding.



A recent Associated Press article described the Superior Court of Los Angeles County's efforts to increase its jury pools by dedicating courtrooms to sanction hearings for citizens who refuse to fulfill their jury service. A single mother who appeared before Judge James L. Wright had her service deferred for a year. *Photo: API/Wide World Photos*

'Program in Place for Warrant Reduction,' *Merced Sun-Star*, June 30, 2004

Described how the Superior Court of Merced County is partnering with the sheriff's office to extend court hours to accommodate individuals wishing to clear up outstanding warrants.

'Local Court to Hold Small Claims Class,' *Imperial Valley Press* (El Centro), June 27, 2004

Reported that the Superior Court of Imperial County's self-help center in El Centro would conduct free small claims clinics.

'Civil Trials Resume Monday,' *Desert Sun* (Palm Springs), June 26, 2004

Reported that the Superior Court of Riverside County would resume hearing civil trials, ending a temporary reassignment of civil judges to reduce a backlog in criminal cases.

'Law Experts Offer Advice for Civil Suits,' *Record* (Stockton), June 22, 2004

Featured the Superior Court of San Joaquin County's legal clinics, where volunteer attorneys, clerks, and trained law students guide self-represented litigants through the legal process.

'Despite Deal, County Courts Still Facing Budget Cuts,' *Mercury News* (San Jose), June 16, 2004

Announced that the Superior Court of Santa Clara County would have to reduce its services due to budget concerns and was inviting public input on the process via the feedback button on its Web site.

'Judicial Gathering,' *Gazette* (Mariposa), June 16, 2004

Pictured judicial leaders gathering to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Mariposa County Courthouse.

'Superior Court Receives \$1.2 Million Grant,' *Palo Alto Daily News*, June 12, 2004

Announced that the Superior Court of Santa Clara County received a grant to fund a study of how supervised visitation centers keep victims of domestic violence and their children safe from continuing harm.

'Good Move for Child Support,' *North County Times* (Escondido), June 8, 2004

Reported that the Superior Court of San Diego County would begin hearing child support cases in Vista, relieving many parents of the need to make the long drive to San Diego.

'In Yolo County, Grandparents and Courts Join Forces to Change Lives,' *California Bar Journal*, June 2004

Discussed how the Superior Court of Yolo County's guardianship clinic is helping grandparent guardians fill out forms, make court appearances, and fulfill their duties related to child care and insurance. ■

TALKING POINTS

Making a Difference, One Juror at a Time

CHIEF JUSTICE
RONALD M. GEORGE

Statewide initiatives to improve our jury system are critical to promoting public trust and confidence in California's justice system. The statewide adoption of one-day or one-trial jury service, the use of simplified jury instructions, and juror education and outreach efforts such as the juror orientation video Ideals Made Real—all are serving to improve the experience of citizens reporting for jury duty.

Of equal importance, however, are the efforts of those working in our courthouses who, through their attitude and commitment, are making a difference every day in shaping the public's view and understanding of our courts and jury system. The following recent commentary by

Contra Costa Times *Editor Dan Hatfield on his own jury service experience serves to underscore this point.*

To place Mr. Hatfield's observations in context, it is worth noting that a 1992 survey of Californians' attitudes on the court system found that 57 percent of the respondents' direct experience with the court system was through friends or relatives who had served as jurors. Another 21 percent of respondents had, themselves, served on juries. The respect accorded to those individuals reporting to the courthouse, the professionalism of court employees who demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the system, and the time taken by a judge to explain the fundamental process underpinning our nation's system of democracy can make the difference in whether a potential juror fulfills his

or her civic obligation with a sense of purpose and duty or with apathy and resentment.

Mr. Hatfield's account of his jury service experience is echoed in many news stories about other courts around the state—stories that offer resounding proof of the positive impact the efforts that an individual court, an employee, or a judge can have on how the public perceives our justice system. By continuing to send the message to jurors, in actions and in words, that our system respects their civic contribution and values their time, every member of our court family can help shape and inform public understanding of the unique role of the courts and the importance of jury service in protecting individual rights.

Jury Service an Engaging Adventure

DAN HATFIELD
EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR, *CONTRA COSTA TIMES*

September 5, 2004

The *Times* has committed to increasing watchdog efforts over the government that is supposed to serve the public.

It is a commitment we take seriously, but one we also want to undertake fairly. Sometimes it is as important to know what's working right as it is to know the things that are wrong.

Such is the case with jury service in Contra Costa County. Like many, I groaned at the letter that told me to report August 30 to superior court for jury service.

From past experience, I knew to call a phone number the night before and that I might “get lucky enough” to be dismissed. So I dutifully waited until August 29 to call the number. That, of course, was a dumb move because it meant I did not read the rest of the jury summons, which asked me to fill out a form and send it back within five days. The form was information needed to speed processing on the morning of my service. I agonized all Sunday evening about how I could have been such an idiot not to have fully read the summons.

But on Monday morning I took it in and entered a plea of "stupid" to the clerk processing me. Even though it was inconvenient for her, she kindly smiled and said that I wasn't the first and certainly wouldn't be the last.

Already I was feeling better about this jury service thing.

Maybe it wasn't going to be so bad. After all, I could watch *Regis and Kelly* on TV—well, maybe not. I could have even brought my laptop and plugged into one of the data ports available or gone to the law library next door and used a wireless connection.

Who knew?

Apparently many knew, because most of the ports were used by people doing business, checking e-mail and even watching movies. But I had a good book from my favorite author and some great coffee that cost only 75 cents. Life was good. Besides, the last time I was here we sat in this room for a while and then were excused because we weren't needed.

But this day was different.

At 11:15 a.m. a clerk told us they would need two juries, and she read two lists of 60 names, each instructed to return after lunch.

Once we returned, we were sent to our courtrooms. A deputy sheriff, who we later learned was the judge's bailiff, escorted us to Judge Peter Spinetta's courtroom. Once there, the judge told us this would be a criminal case. He introduced us to the defendant, his attorney, the prosecutor, and the court staff.



Then he did something special: he took the time to explain the American legal system and how vital our jury service was to it. He also explained that making excuses to get out of jury duty only hurt the system. Then of course he listened to a few lame ones, but only a few. He explained at length to the rest of us about the uniquely American notion of innocent until proven guilty. He carefully explained that such a concept required the state to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt. And he took the time to make sure that these potential jurors understood him. In my past life as a reporter I had covered courts extensively and knew the concepts, but many there did not. The judge made certain they did before moving on.

This is often characterized as a white, suburban county. After observing and listening to my colleagues in the jury pool, I now know that this is a much more diverse place than I had thought. This jury pool was a wonderful cross-section of the county. Filipinos, Latinos, blacks, Asians, Arabs, Indians, and whites were all there. Teachers, housewives, retirees, an IRS auditor, even a prosecutor from the Alameda County DA's office were all among the pool.

Not surprisingly, both the prosecutor and I were eventually excused by the defense, which meant we could go home.

Surprisingly, that was a bittersweet moment for me. I had gone from wanting to get out of this to a heartfelt obligation to serve.

The American legal system gets plenty of bad press, much of it deserved. But if my jury service is any indication, Contra Costa County's legal system is in good hands.

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Status Report on Self-Help Pilots

The majority of visitors to self-help centers are women between ages 20 and 49 who have at least one child, according to an interim report from five pilot self-help centers around the state. The report also notes that most individuals using self-help services at courts have lower levels of education and income than the general population and have not considered hiring an attorney to assist them.

MEASURING THE PROGRAM

Since fall 2002, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has been overseeing Berkeley Policy Associates (BPA) and NPC Research as they evaluate five distinct self-help models operating in seven superior courts around the state. The goals of the Model Self-Help Centers Pilot Program evaluation are to (1) determine the effectiveness of a variety of strategies for assisting self-represented litigants and (2) develop a profile of center users.

Researchers are documenting issues surrounding the start-up of new centers and new initiatives, outreach to potential center users, and awareness of the centers and their services among poten-

tial users and court staff. In addition, the report offers data on the specific services visitors receive at the self-help centers and their experiences in courtrooms.

PROJECT MODELS

The pilot projects selected for the program model five distinct approaches:

Regional model The Superior Courts of Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties are exploring how relatively small counties that may not be able to afford a full-time attorney at a self-help center can share resources effectively.

Urban collaboration model The Superior Court of Los Angeles County is focusing on coordinating its existing resources for self-represented litigants, ensuring the consistency and quality of services, and providing a seamless service delivery system.

Technology model The Superior Court of Contra Costa County pilot emphasizes the use of technology in services for self-represented litigants by delivering information and assistance via the Internet, computer applications, and real-time videoconferencing workshops.

Spanish-speaking model The Superior Court of Fresno County provides services for a primarily Spanish-speaking population by furnishing self-help instructions in Spanish, providing a Spanish-speaking court examiner to review court documents, sponsoring how-to clinics, and providing volunteer interpreters for court hearings.

Multilingual model The Superior Court of San Francisco County's multilingual center offers visitors access to bilingual attorneys and translation of court materials, and reaches out to non-English-speaking populations through community agencies and local media.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Researchers have used a variety of methods to collect information on the model self-help centers, including site visits, interviews, customer intake and service tracking forms, reviews of files and court data, courtroom observation, and customer satisfaction surveys. Following are some common characteristics of the five centers:

- They are staffed by a combination of legal and paralegal

staff and volunteers;

- Most of the centers offer one-on-one assistance and a variety of workshops;

- All have produced printed materials to assist users; and

- Collaboration with community agencies has played an important role in the centers' successes.

The interim report notes that all of the pilots have reached milestones such as hiring dedicated staff, providing important services to the public, and forging collaborations within the court and with the community. But the pilot programs have also faced challenges in implementing the programs, including technological and budgetary setbacks.

The final report on the pilot program is due to the Judicial Council in February and to the Legislature by March 2005.

- To view the interim report, visit www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/equalaccess/documents/pilot_stat_fall2003.pdf. For more information, contact Bonnie Hough, AOC Center for Families, Children & the Courts, 415-865-7668; e-mail: bonnie.hough@jud.ca.gov. ■



Governor Signs Court Collections Bill

Governor Schwarzenegger on August 31 signed Senate Bill 246 (Escutia), which contains the first legislative changes recommended by the Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections. The Judicial Council-sponsored legislation permits courts and local governments to accept debit cards and electronic payments, adds to the types of debts eligible for collections programs, and extends the Franchise Tax Board's Court-Ordered Debt Collection Program.

The Franchise Tax Board's program has been an effective means for many courts to collect court-ordered debt. The bill would require the Franchise Tax Board, in consultation with the Judicial Council, to seek whatever additional resources are necessary to accept referrals from all 58 superior courts and counties. The bill also would delete the 2006 repeal date and extend the program indefinitely.

- To view the entire bill, visit www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html.

Court Collections

Continued from page 1

appointed the 20 working group members on the basis of their expertise in the area of court collections. In addition, 60 subcommittee members, representing 14 courts and 12 counties, aided the working group in its research and development of the recommendations. Subcommittee members consisted of representatives from the California State Association of Counties, California Youth Authority, Department of Corrections, Franchise Tax Board, State Controller's Office, and Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board.

"This working group has truly been a cooperative and collaborative effort between courts, counties, and state agencies," says working group chair Sheila Gonzalez, Regional Administrative Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts' (AOC) Southern Regional Office. "These recommendations are based on the expertise of everyone involved."

"The working group presented an opportunity for courts and counties to solve problems collaboratively," says Chuck Wagner, Assistant Director of Tax Collections for Tuolumne County. "As we work together, collections will grow. It's important not just for the revenue, but to enforce the rule of law."

DEVELOPMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In preparing the report, the working group surveyed and

analyzed the effectiveness of existing court collections programs and court-county collection models. One of their surveys was on fee waivers granted by courts.

The draft *Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections Report* was sent to courts, counties, and other interested parties in June for their review and comment. The group also posted the report through July on the Invitations to Comment page of the public California Courts Web site. In response to comments received, the report was simplified and some of its recommendations were modified. For instance, the final report recommends that individual courts report on their collections semiannually instead of quarterly.

IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS UNDER WAY

The working group will oversee the implementation of its guidelines and standards, which provide courts and counties with options for establishing or enhancing programs based on their specific needs and resources. One need the working group identified during its research was the lack of available training and technical assistance in the area of court collections.

Presiding Judge Douglas P. Miller of the Superior Court of Riverside County taught a course in June at the B. E. Witkin Judicial College of California that focused on restitution, fines, fees, and fee waivers. It was offered through the AOC Education Division/Center for Judicial Education and Research to en-

hance judicial officers' knowledge of fines and fees and the authority for collecting court-ordered debt. The course will become an annual offering at the judicial college.

"It's important to have uniformity across the state," says Judge Miller, who served as faculty for the workshops. "Obviously it is imperative to make sure judges have the tools and training in the area of fines and penalties because they are integral to making this effort work."

In July and August, the AOC sponsored five collections workshops throughout the state. Nearly 300 representatives, including individuals from almost every superior court and county, learned about reporting requirements and best practices in court collections. Judicial officers and court and county administrators involved in collection processes conducted the workshops, which were designed to encourage courts and counties to jointly develop enhanced collections programs.

RESOURCES FOR COURTS

A working group subcommittee chaired by Superior Court of Sierra County Presiding Judge William W. Pangman is finalizing a standardized fine and fee schedule for use by judicial officers and their staffs. The first phase in the introduction of the schedule is an Excel spreadsheet that will be available in the coming months. The subcommittee anticipates that a more user-friendly Access database will be ready by the beginning of next year. In the long term, the work-

ing group is exploring integrating the schedule into the California Case Management System.

The working group will select collection agencies under a master agreement that will be available for courts and counties wishing to use external vendors to enhance their collection efforts. In addition, the working group will compile recommended best practices for collections in a procedures manual.

Courts and counties will be required to report their 2003-2004 fiscal-year-end outstanding collection account balances to the Judicial Council by December 1, 2004. Moving forward as required by Senate Bill 940, courts and counties will be required to report annually to the Judicial Council on the effectiveness of cooperative court-county collections programs. The council also approved a recommendation from the working group that courts and counties submit midyear reports to help identify those in need of assistance and support.

Senate Bill 940 calls for the Judicial Council to report to the Legislature on the effectiveness of the enhanced collections program as appropriate.

- To view the entire *Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections Report*, visit www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0804item5.pdf. For more information, contact Jessica Lee, AOC Southern Regional Office, 818-558-3068; e-mail: jessica.lee@jud.ca.gov. ■

San Diego's Homeless Court

Taking It to the Shelter

BETH SHIRK

Joe's nicotine-stained fingers curl around his coffee cup while he talks. His skin is rough and darkened by his days living outdoors, and his gravelly voice and rough grammar disguise the tender spirit within.

Joe returned from Vietnam with medals and memories—and a heroin addiction he could not shake. He has lived on San Diego's streets for three years. He says he likes the weather.

Joe is trying to build a life for himself, one day at a time. And today he is clean and sober and can walk on San Diego's streets without fear of incarceration, thanks to the Superior Court of San Diego County's Homeless Court Program. The program enables homeless defendants to clear up minor infractions and misdemeanors without going to a courthouse or risking arrest.

GOING TO THE HOMELESS

The San Diego court's Homeless Court Program—which includes the judge, bailiff, clerks, prosecutor, and public defender—meets the challenge of serving a displaced population by holding its monthly special court session at a homeless shelter. The judge stands at a podium rather than sitting at a table, to be eye-to-eye with the defendants.

Defendants are able to resolve their legal issues in a more convenient and less intimidating environment than a courtroom, while the court is able to bring resolution to many cases that would otherwise linger in its system.

"The goal for the homeless defendant is to leave court with a clean slate," says the court's supervising judge, Peter C. Deddeh. "The goal of the court is to relieve some of the backlog of pending cases, as well as to improve the trust and confidence of one of the city's most vulnerable populations."

The court was conceived by San Diego Public Defender Steve Binder, who had struggled to serve a homeless population that was overwhelmingly fearful of going to a courthouse. "Steve is the catalyst of the homeless court," says Judge Deddeh. "He has the passion and enthusiasm that make the program successful."

COLLABORATION EQUALS SUCCESS

The monthly homeless court is a collaborative effort involving the superior court, the San Diego Public Defender's Office, the city attorney, the District Attorney's Office, and providers of services to homeless people.

The process begins with referrals to the homeless court by homeless shelters and service providers. Once the referral list is reviewed by Mr. Binder, the list is forwarded to the prosecution and to Court Clerk Maria Valdez. Ms. Valdez researches up to 175 cases each month, some of them as old as seven years. The court then forwards the information back to Mr. Binder, who meets with defendants to discuss their cases.

Key to the success of the program is the fact that defendants outline their progress in substance abuse recovery, job training, and other social service programs. "Tracking positive progress helps us in negotiations with the city attorney," says Mr. Binder. "The city attorney recognizes that the defendants' efforts to improve their lives are more difficult than serving a jail sentence or paying a fine." The city attorney estimates that more than 90 percent of the cases are eventually dismissed.

"The clients have to earn their way to dismissal," adds Judge Deddeh. "They are being recognized by the system for all their hard work."

HOMELESS POPULATION DIFFICULT TO REACH

Many homeless men and women accumulate misdemeanors and infractions as a routine part of their lives in the urban outdoors. Public drunkenness, loitering, sleeping outdoors, petty theft, and hygiene-related charges become a familiar part of survival. Tickets are generally forgotten in the daily search for food and shelter.

Clearing up legal issues is a daunting hurdle for homeless defendants. Simply entering a courthouse poses risks—such as losing one's belongings left in an unsecured shopping cart. At the same time, it is difficult for these men and women to apply for jobs and housing without clearing up legal matters that they may not even remember.

GAINING RECOGNITION

"The program is awesome," says Taletha Suits, who has served as a clerk for the homeless court for two years. "Some of the defendants have hit bottom, and seeing them help themselves is beautiful. It's my favorite assignment with the court."

The program has also received national recognition. The Ash Institute for Democratic Government and Innovation named San Diego's homeless court a finalist in its Innovations in Government Awards for 2004. Only 15 finalists were named from the more than 1,000 nominations received from programs at all levels of federal, state, and local government. In addition, San Diego's program was featured at the American Bar Association's National Conference on Homeless Courts on October 8 in San Diego.

San Diego's homeless court model has been replicated in 10 courts in California and in several other states. A how-to manual is available for courts interested in starting their own homeless court programs.

"It's why I became a lawyer," adds Mr. Binder. "Everyone is respected, and for the homeless it reconciles their past."

● For more information on the San Diego County court's Homeless Court Program, contact Steve Binder, San Diego Public Defender, 619-338-4708. ■



Court Clerks Taletha Suits (seated) and Maria Valdez research cases referred to San Diego's homeless court program by local shelters and service providers. Photo: Beth Shirk

Taking It to the Streets: A National Conference on Homeless Courts

October 8, 2004, San Diego

Sponsored by the American Bar Association, the Taking It to the Streets conference welcomed judges, court administrators, law enforcement, government officials, prosecutors, public defenders, and others working with homeless men and women.

The founders of the Superior Court of San Diego County's Homeless Court Program—along with the key players from similar programs in Bakersfield, Los Angeles, Ventura, and Albuquerque—

examined the special needs of homeless people. Presenters covered:

- Creating and operating a homeless court;
- Community responses; and
- Benefits for the participants, the community, and the court system.

● For more information, visit the American Bar Association's Web site at www.abanet.org/jd/pdf/homeless_courts.pdf or contact Amy Horton-Newell, 202-662-1693; e-mail: hortonan@staff.abanet.org.



At a local shelter, Judge Peter C. Deddeh presides over the Superior Court of San Diego County's homeless court, which enables homeless defendants to clear up minor infractions and misdemeanors without going to a courthouse or risking arrest. Photo: Courtesy of CTN Productions

Q&A

Judges Have a Voice

Conversation With Presiding Judge Frederick Paul Horn



Presiding Judge Frederick Horn
Superior Court of Orange County

By his own admission, serving as chair of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee for the past three years has been the highlight of Superior Court of Orange County Judge Frederick Paul Horn's time on the bench.

"The presiding judges of this state are a wonderful group to work with and a tremendous resource," says Judge Horn. "Participating in both the local and statewide development of the branch is part of the role of being a judge and makes the position of judging more fulfilling."

Since his appointment to the Orange County bench in 1991, Judge Horn has taken an interest in judicial education and branchwide issues. In addition to his duties as presiding judge and chair of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee, he is on the Continuing Judicial Studies Program Planning Committee and serves on the faculties of both the B. E. Witkin Judicial College of California and the New Judge Orientation Program of the Administrative Office of the Courts' (AOC) Center for Judicial Education and Research. In addition, Judge Horn served as chair of the council's Access and Fairness Advisory Committee and is a current member of the Commission on Judicial Performance.

Chief Justice Ronald M. George in October reappointed Judge Horn to chair the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee for another year. Court News spoke with Judge Horn about his work on the committee and its impact on court administration in California.

My sense is that there is a growing recognition among [bench officers] that presiding judges now have the trust and respect to effectively weigh in on policy decisions on their behalf.

The Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee was established to enhance judges' access to and participation in the Judicial Council decision-making process and improve communication between the council and the courts. How is the committee fulfilling that role? What are the challenges?

The committee is an important group that contributes in many ways to court administration in California. We are very active in creating and amending rules of court, as well as in developing legislation that affects the courts. We also participate in discussions of policy issues that come before the council.

The committee has been very effective in its charge, but dealing with long-term issues presents a challenge because of the turnover of its members. Due to staggered terms, the bulk of the committee is together for only one year at a time.

However, some presiding judges in the state have been re-elected and are serving consecutive terms. When this occurs it provides for greater continuity, improves working relationships, and allows the committee to be even more productive and have a greater impact on statewide issues.

What are the current top priorities for your committee?

Increasing the number of bench officers has been a priority for the past several years. The committee was instrumental in the Judicial Council's action at its August 27 meeting, when it agreed to seek legislation for 150 new judgeships over the next three years.

The committee has been very effective in its charge, but dealing with long-term issues presents a challenge because of the turnover of its members.

Issues the committee deals with on a regular basis include budgets, court staffing, and case management. As I mentioned before, court rules and legislation are also two areas in which the committee is heavily involved. In fact, we have a standing subcommittee on rules and one on legislative issues. These are chaired by Presiding Judges

term projects, such as creating and implementing new policies, rules, or legislation. I'm frequently asked to identify presiding judges to participate in these groups.

Can you provide an example of how the committee has helped to form statewide policy?

About three years ago our committee recommended that the AOC's Finance Division create a budget working group consisting of presiding judges and court executives from throughout the state. The idea was to create an informal mechanism for discussing the judicial branch budget process.

AOC Finance Division Director Tina Hansen, with concurrence from Administrative Director of the Courts Bill Vickrey, agreed with our proposal. This working group has played an active role in statewide budget decisions ever since. It is a good example of the Judicial Council, AOC, presiding judges,

and court executives working together to create a better and stronger judicial branch.

This collaborative effort has been so successful that it has been officially adopted by the Judicial Council as the branchwide approach for dealing with budget issues. It was formalized in August with the creation of the Trial Court Budget Working Group. This new working group will replace all other previous budget committees or groups.

How have changes in the structure of the branch affected the way presiding judges weigh in on statewide issues related to judicial administration?

It has changed dramatically. Preunification, with both superior and municipal courts, the state had 267 presiding judges. We now have only 58, one per county.

Our committee and presiding judges across the state have a cohesiveness that was not possible with the large numbers we had before unification. We are able to meet and correspond via conference call more frequently and are working better as a group than ever before.

We are also working more closely with the council and the AOC. Communication among these organizations has grown.

This is important because we now can send one strong message on behalf of the judicial branch on issues such as the budget and new legislation.

What impact have presiding judges had on judicial administration in California?

There are approximately 2,000 bench officers in the state of California. My sense is that there is a growing recognition among them that presiding judges now have the trust and respect to effectively weigh in on policy decisions on their behalf. The Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee is the primary branchwide vehicle to communicate issues and concerns raised on a local level by the trial court judges.

The role of presiding judges and the committee and the issues we confront have changed substantially in the last few years. Certainly one of our priorities is advocating for judicial needs and the concerns of bench

officers in the day-to-day operations of their courtrooms. But it is becoming increasingly important for presiding judges to work with court executives on administrative issues such as developing the court's budget.

What advice do you have for new presiding judges?

Take every opportunity to learn how the state and the judicial branch operate, beginning with the budget process and the relationship we have with the executive and legislative branches. It is also important to learn how the Judicial Council and its advisory committees function. Service on a council advisory committee is good experience and training for future presiding judges.

As the courts continue to grow as a branch of government, it is important for presiding judges to act as liaisons between the state and bench officers at their courts. Communication is critical for better understanding. ■

Prop. 66 Proposes Major Changes In Three-Strikes Law

JUDGE J. RICHARD COUZENS
SUPERIOR COURT OF
PLACER COUNTY

JUDGE TRICIA ANN BIGELOW
SUPERIOR COURT OF
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The California three-strikes law was first enacted by the Legislature in March 1994, then “reenacted” by the electorate through an initiative the following November. Although legislation has periodically been introduced to temper the impact of the law, nothing has even gotten out of legislative committees.

In March 2000 the electors passed Proposition 21, which added new crimes as strikes. Proposition 66, now on the November ballot, would substantially alter the application of the three-strikes law.

CURRENT CONVICTIONS

The most significant proposed change is in the type of current conviction that qualifies for strike treatment. Under the present law, a defendant may receive a strike sentence if he or she commits any felony and has one or more prior serious or violent felony convictions. If the defendant has one prior strike, he or she may be sentenced to state prison for twice the term otherwise provided. If the defendant has two or more prior strikes, he or she may receive a sentence of 25 years to life.

Proposition 66 specifies that for a defendant to receive either second- or third-strike punishment, the current crime also must be a serious or violent felony. Since historically only about one-third of persons prosecuted with strikes committed new serious or violent crimes, this change likely would substantially reduce prosecutions under the three-strikes law.

PRIOR PROSECUTIONS

Proposition 66 also seeks to change the way strikes are counted in prior prosecutions. Under the present law, for example, if a defendant is convicted of five residential burglaries in the same proceeding, he or she incurs five strikes. Proposition 66 would require the crimes to be “brought and tried separately,” meaning the defendant under these circumstances would have only one strike under the new statute.

Under the present law, if the defendant commits multiple crimes on separate occasions, the sentences for those crimes must be consecutive. Under Proposition 66, only the sentences for current serious or violent felonies would have to be consecutive; the court could sentence for all other felonies either concurrently or consecutively, as it determined appropriate.

CRIMES CONSIDERED STRIKES

Proposition 66 also would change the list of crimes considered “strikes”—the designation of serious or violent felonies. Under the present law, the defendant is considered to have committed a violent felony if

glary as a strike unless someone is home during the burglary. Furthermore, the initiative would remove all attempted burglaries as strikes, even if someone is home.

Proposition 66 also would eliminate as strikes the following offenses: making criminal



great bodily injury was inflicted on a victim during the commission of any crime, whether or not the defendant intended to cause any injury. Under Proposition 66, the existence of great bodily injury would not constitute a strike unless it were proved that the defendant specifically intended to inflict the injury and personally acted to do so.

The change would profoundly affect prosecutions for episodes of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs in which someone is killed or injured. Under such circumstances, the presence of the injury likely would not constitute a serious or violent felony because the prosecution generally would not be able to show that the defendant intended to cause harm to the victim.

Under the present law, any residential burglary is a serious felony, and a residential burglary is a violent felony if someone is home at the time. Proposition 66 would eliminate residential bur-

threats under Penal Code section 422, gang crimes under Penal Code section 186.22, arson of forest land under Penal Code section 451, and conspiracy to commit assault.

Currently, juvenile adjudications listed in Welfare and Institutions Code section 707(b)

constitute strikes if they are committed by a person between 16 and 18 years old. Proposition 66 would eliminate as strikes crimes committed by juveniles against the elderly and disabled under Penal Code section 1203.09.

REQUIRED RESENTENCING

If Proposition 66 is enacted, courts will be required to resentence any person currently serving a life term (all third-strike offenders, and all second-strike offenders who commit crimes with indeterminate terms) if the person’s current crime is not a serious or violent felony as defined in the new law. Resentencing must occur no earlier than 30 days and no later than 180 days after the proposition becomes effective.

It is estimated that approximately 5,000 inmates would require resentencing under the terms of Proposition 66. Second-strike offenders, however, may be able to challenge their exclusion from resentencing because of a denial of equal protection of the law. If such a challenge were successful, the number of resentencings would swell to some 28,000 persons. ■



Judge J. Richard Couzens



Judge Tricia Ann Bigelow

Judge Couzens and Judge Bigelow co-author California Three Strikes Sentencing (<http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/documents/3strikes.pdf>) and frequently teach felony sentencing at Center for Judicial Education and Research programs.

Task Force Setting Course for Law Libraries

A Judicial Council task force that was established this year is studying how California’s law libraries work and identifying possible sources of funding to continue or expand the libraries’ operations.

The Task Force on County Law Libraries, established in January, is developing standards for county law libraries’ facilities and identifying their operational needs. It is collecting information on the types of individuals who use law libraries (both attorneys and nonattorneys), the qualifications of library staff, necessary reference materials, and potential alternative funding sources.

The nine-member task force is composed of county officials, law library administrators, and three representatives from the judicial branch, including the group’s chair, Superior Court of Sacramento County Judge Michael T. Garcia. The task force is required to submit a final report and recommendations to the Judicial Council and the Legislature by January 1, 2005.

● For more information on the task force, contact Dan Pone, AOC Office of Governmental Affairs, 916-323-3121; e-mail: daniel.pone@jud.ca.gov.

Legal Services Reps Come Together in S.F.



More than 150 people representing legal services and court staffs, law librarians, and the bar met for the Connecting the Dots: Statewide Stakeholders Meeting hosted by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Legal Services Coordinating Council on August 27 in San Francisco. The participants discussed online resources, services to juveniles, media planning, appellate assistance, language barriers, family law, cooperation between courts and legal services, and other topics.

Chief Justice Ronald M. George and State Bar President Anthony Capozzi were key speakers at a special

event during the meeting to introduce new features of the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/), as well as a new Web site developed by the Public Interest Clearinghouse that provides substantive legal information on civil matters and referrals to legal assistance in all 58 California counties. Unique in California, the site (www.LawHelpCA.org/) offers help with federal law—such as immigration, bankruptcy, disability, and civil rights—and has features for seniors and Native Americans.



Education & Development

CLASS: Update On Online Learning

More than 2,000 users have registered to create or participate in 60-plus "CLASS sites" on the Web. The CLASS (Collaborating, Learning, and Sharing Space) sites were developed for online courses, meetings, and information sharing.

CLASS is another name for Blackboard, a software application that enables individuals with little or no technical expertise to create Web sites on which they can post documents, create surveys and quizzes, participate in online discussions, and use other built-in tools to exchange ideas and information.

COURT SITES

California courts have found innovative ways to use CLASS. Examples of CLASS sites include:

► **Alameda County** The court's GO Staff Development Committee uses CLASS to conduct meetings and plan future

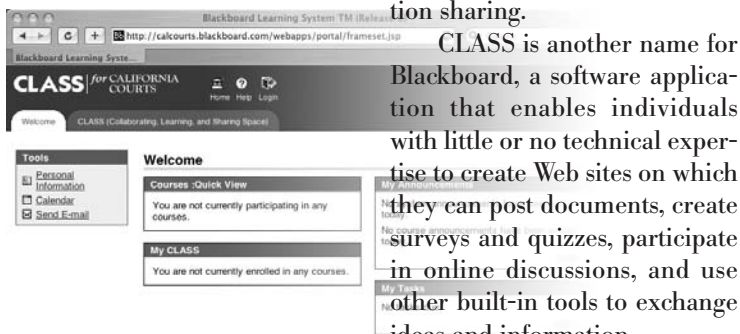
training classes and newsletter articles for court employees.

► **Los Angeles County** Court research attorneys developed classes for State Bar MCLE credit and continuing education for California court attorneys, including courses on handling demurrers to fraud claims, ethics for superior court research attorneys, elimination of bias in the courts, and law and procedure regarding substance abuse.

► **San Diego County** The court created a site centered on the court's involvement in the development of the California Case Management System.

► **Orange County** The court created courses to help staff prevent injuries and developed training on the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS).

► **San Francisco County** The court developed a course to help its staff become familiar with telecommunication devices used by deaf and hard-of-hearing people.



Orientation to Court Leadership

October 27–29, Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport, Burlingame

The Center for Judicial Education and Research's Presiding Judges Orientation and Court Management Program is tailored for the executive leadership teams of the courts, including presiding judges, presiding judges-elect, assistant presiding judges, supervising judges, executive officers, and assistant executive officers.

The experienced judges and court executive officers who serve as faculty will cover topics such as duties and responsibilities, the transition to the leadership role, management of judicial and administrative resources, judicial branch relationships, and creating a leadership vision for the court.

● For more information, contact Karen Moen, Senior Education Specialist, 415-865-7823; e-mail: karen.moen@jud.ca.gov.

► **Yolo County** The court created a site to administer surveys on staff communication and training issues.

CLASS is also being utilized by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) for projects such as the Unified Courts for Families Program. The AOC developed a CLASS site for its staff and the courts to exchange information, share resources, and collaborate on aspects of unification and coordination be-

tween family and juvenile courts. It has also used CLASS to work on branchwide education, conference planning, and curriculum development, as well as internal staff training.

● For more information on CLASS, contact Eddie Davis, AOC Education Division/Center for Judicial Education and Research, 415-865-7751; e-mail: eddie.davis@jud.ca.gov. ■

Fall Continuing Judicial Studies Program

The Continuing Judicial Studies Program (CJSP) continues to meet the specialized educational needs of experienced judges. This year's fall program will be held October 25–29 at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco Airport in Burlingame.

CJSP will include courses on criminal law, death penalty trials, civil discovery issues, DNA, evidence, fact finding and decision making, jurisprudence, juvenile law, and mental health law. The program is based on the premise that experienced professionals learn best from each other, so the courses focus on continuous interaction between faculty

and participants.

For the first time, CJSP will have a scholar-in-residence in an effort to increase communication between judges and academics. University of Virginia School of Law Professor Michael J. Klarman will be present during the first three days of the program. Professor Klarman will give a plenary talk about the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, teach a course on the moral and personal dilemmas of judging, and participate in workshops.

The Continuing Judicial Studies Education Committee of the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER)

is responsible for the four CJSP events and four *Great Minds* broadcasts offered each year. The committee is led by chair Judge Gary S. Austin, Superior Court of Fresno County, and vice-chair Judge Alice C. Hill, Superior Court of Los Angeles County.

● For more information on the Fall CJSP, visit www.courtinfo.ca.gov/cjer/ or contact Susan Gordon, AOC Education Division/CJER, 415-865-7760; e-mail: susan.gordon@jud.ca.gov.

CJSP Scholar-in-Residence

Professor Michael J. Klarman is a James Monroe Distinguished Professor of Law and professor of history at the University of Virginia. His book *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights: The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality* is a highly acclaimed analysis of race and constitutional law.

Professor Klarman graduated from Stanford Law School and completed a doctoral thesis in legal history as a Marshall Scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford. Before joining the University of Virginia faculty in 1987, he clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg when she sat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. Professor Klarman was the recipient of the first Roger and Madeleine Traynor Faculty Achievement Award for Excellence in Legal Scholarship in 1996.

Beyond the Bench XV

Some 1,000 judicial officers, attorneys, social workers, probation officers, court staff members, and other juvenile justice and child welfare professionals from throughout California will come together December 8–10 in San Jose for the 15th annual Beyond the Bench conference.

With the theme "Engaging Communities," the conference will address issues of juvenile justice, child welfare, family violence, substance abuse, education, and community engagement. Prominent speakers will include Minnesota Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz and retired Navajo Nation Chief Justice Robert Yazzie. Special symposia will be offered on restorative justice, basic dependency law for attorneys, and training for youth.

The conference will also feature Leslie Neale, director of the documentary film

Juvies. The film documents the prosecution of youth as adults through videos taken by the youths themselves. *Juvies* will be shown during the conference banquet and will be followed by a question-and-answer session with Ms. Neale.

● For more information and to register, visit www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/ or contact Christopher Wu, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, 415-865-7721; e-mail: christopher.wu@jud.ca.gov.

Children's Art and Poetry Contest

The Administrative Office of the Courts' (AOC) Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) is sponsoring the second annual Children's Art and Poetry Contest. The contest is open to children of any age with experi-

ence in the court system and is intended to give them a voice by encouraging self-expression through the arts.

Original art of any kind (including photography, collage, and painting) and original poetry (including haiku, rap, and limerick)—limited to one page—are eligible for entry. Flyers (in English and Spanish) and entry forms for the contest are available for downloading from CFCC's Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/.

The selected works will be displayed at the Beyond the Bench XV: Engaging Communities conference on December 8–10 in San Jose and will be published in CFCC, AOC, and Judicial Council printed materials.

● For more information, contact Stacey Mangni, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, 415-865-7659; e-mail: stacey.mangni@jud.ca.gov.



Resources

New Guide for Unifying Courts For Families

A new deskbook on unification and coordination of family and juvenile matters describes the historical context in which the need for coordination has grown and defines the basic operational issues that face trial courts when they initiate unified family courts.

The *Unified Courts for Families Deskbook: A Guide for California Courts on Unifying and Coordinating Family and Juvenile Law Matters* discusses the due process and confidentiality issues that must be addressed and offers detailed suggestions on approaches to coordination in the major case types most frequently included in a unified court strategy. The appendix to the deskbook contains a brief description of “mentor courts.” These are courts using approaches to unification or coordination that will be assessed and documented so that other courts can learn from them and replicate their approaches.

The deskbook is for judicial officers, court administrators, family law facilitators and other court-based self-help attorneys, case managers, mediators, clerks, and others involved with court operations.

The *Unified Courts for Families Deskbook* is being published in conjunction with California’s Unified Courts for Families (UCF) Program. Under the Judicial Council’s Operational Plan, the UCF Program is working to help courts improve the management of family and children’s cases, with particular emphasis on unifying and coordinating court procedures.

The deskbook was developed by the Administrative Office of the Courts’ Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC), the Judicial Council’s Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, and individuals from mentor court teams.

● For more information or to obtain a copy of the deskbook, visit www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/pdffiles/UCFdeskbook.pdf or contact Rowena Rogelio, CFCC, 415-865-7730; e-mail: rowena.rogelio@jud.ca.gov.

NCSC Addresses Federal Sentencing Guidelines

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in July published a paper analyzing the current constitutional debate on the federal sentencing guidelines and how the *Blakely* decision affects sentencing by state court judges.

In *Blakely*, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Washington state’s sentencing method and ruled that any aggravating facts that would increase a defendant’s sentence must be proven by a jury, not decided by a judge. The new NCSC paper analyzes the *Blakely* decision and its potential impact on state courts.

NCSC researchers found that the more similar a state’s guidelines to the federal guidelines, the greater the impact of the federal guidelines on that state. California is one of 12 states identified by NCSC as being affected by the decision. The exact number, however, is difficult to gauge because some implications of the case are not yet clear, according to Anne Skove, an NCSC senior knowledge management analyst.

According to the paper, areas of court management and the legal system that might feel the greatest effects include plea and charge bargaining, juries, and court budgets. Potential solutions for states with *Blakely* issues include bifurcation, waiver, voluntary (as opposed to mandatory) guidelines, and amendments of guidelines.

● To view the entire document, visit NCSC’s Web site at www.ncsonline.org/WC

/Publications/KIS_SentenBlakely.pdf. For more information, contact Lorri Montgomery, NCSC, 757-259-1525.

Judicial Council Annual Report Spotlights Children

The Judicial Council’s *2004 Annual Report* summarizes the judicial branch’s progress and challenges in court administration, highlights the branch’s contributions to confronting the state’s fiscal challenges, and describes key trends in court caseload.

The 32-page report contains images of paintings and drawings that were submitted in 2003 to the Children’s Art and Poetry Contest sponsored by the Administrative Office of the Courts’ Center for Families,

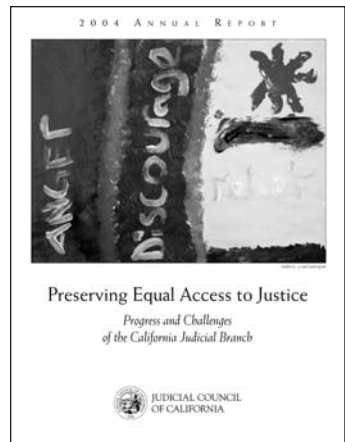
Children & the Courts. The images highlight the vital role courts play in the lives of children and their families.

The online version of the report links readers to numerous resources on the California Courts Web site—including reports, studies, fact sheets, and local court Web sites—for more detailed information on specific topics.

A companion volume to the annual report, the *2004 Court Statistics Report*, provides statistical data on caseload trends statewide and in each of the 58 counties.

Both reports were released in July.

● For more information or copies of the reports, visit the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/ or contact the California Courts Infoline at pubinfo@jud.ca.gov or 800-900-5980. ■



The California court system’s public Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/ and Serranus, the courts’ password-protected Web site, at <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/> continually add information and features to keep the public, judges, and court staff up to date on judicial programs and resources. Following are recent additions.

Council Reports, Materials Online

Reports and materials that the Judicial Council will discuss at its business meetings are now available online as links in the posted agenda. In addition, the council posts archives of reports proposing new and amended California Rules of Court, standards of judicial administration, Judicial Council jury instructions, and Judicial Council forms.

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/, www.courtinfo.ca.gov/rules/reports/, www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms/reports/

New Rules and Forms Online

Newly amended rules of court and links to all current local rules are available on the California Courts Web site. All current Judicial Council forms are available for downloading, most are available in fillable format (for on-screen completion), and many are available as nonfillable translations in other languages.

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/rules/, www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms/

Updated Benchguides on CD-Rom

An updated *California Judges Electronic Benchguides* CD-ROM contains copies of all 31 benchguides, covering criminal, civil, and juvenile court proceedings. Links to 600 new cases have been added to the CD-ROM since it was last updated in 2002.

<http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/education/benchguides/>

New Video on JBRadio: Ramifications of *Blakely* Decision

The recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Blakely v. Washington* calls into question the ability of California courts to impose aggravated prison terms under the current sentencing rules and procedures. Excerpted from the 2004 Criminal Law Institute, the video addresses the decision and offers practical tips for handling current cases.

<http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/education/jbradio/crim.htm>

Guide for Juvenile Delinquency Attorneys

A new guide, *Effective Representation of Children in Juvenile Delinquency Court*, gives attorneys for children in juvenile court information on their dual roles: defending the child against the charged allegations and working to have the child receive care, treatment, and guidance consistent with his or her best interest.

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/pdffiles/EffRepChildrenBro.pdf

Community Justice Program

A new brochure describes the California Community Justice Project, which promotes awareness and understanding of community justice principles and practices, facilitates information sharing, and assists in the development of local programs.

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/ccjp/resources.htm

Master Calendar Online

The AOC Master Calendar is a central source of information for the courts on training, conferences, meetings, and other events coordinated or hosted by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

<http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/calendar/>

● Not a Serranus user? For access, e-mail serranus@jud.ca.gov.

National Judicial College Offers Scholarships

The National Judicial College is offering scholarships to its programs under a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The college, located in Reno, provides courses on administrative law, ethics, evidence, judicial decision making, and many other topics.

Scholarships may cover tuition, conference fees, travel, and lodging. (Although scholarships for travel and lodging are rare, they are occasionally granted to judges from states that have no funding for out-of-state programs.) The college’s scholarship committee makes weekly determinations of scholarship recipients and the amounts allotted.

● To apply for a scholarship, e-mail a request to Nancy Copfer, National Judicial College, copfer@judges.org, or call her at 800-255-8343. For more information on the National Judicial College and its programs, visit www.judges.org/.

Court Briefs



Judge Leonard P. Edwards
Superior Court of Santa Clara County

Judge Edwards Receives Rehnquist Award

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) named Superior Court of Santa Clara County Judge Leonard P. Edwards the recipient of its 2004 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence.

One of the most prestigious judicial honors in the country, the award is presented annually to a state court judge who exemplifies the highest level of judicial excellence, integrity, fairness, and professional ethics. Chief Justice of the United States William H. Rehnquist will present the award to Judge Edwards at a ceremony on November 18 in the great hall of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

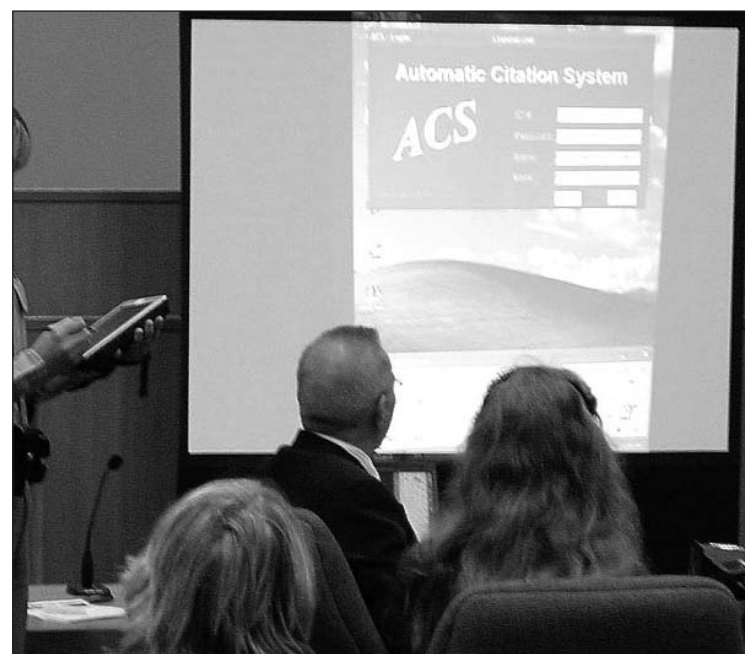
A former chair and current member of the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, Judge Edwards has been a leader and made countless contributions in the areas of juvenile and family courts, domestic violence prevention and intervention, judicial leadership, and court coordination. His work has influenced courts in California, the nation, and the world.

In Santa Clara County, Judge Edwards's efforts resulted in the juvenile dependency court's being designated as a national model by the National Council of Juvenile and Family

Court Judges. This court is one of the most visited courts in the country; each year hundreds of legal professionals travel there to observe and learn the model practices Judge Edwards implemented, such as dependency court mediation and family group conferencing. In 1999 Judge Edwards established one of the country's first dependency drug treatment courts, which was later named a mentor court by the National Institute of Drug Court Professionals.

Widening his scope to other countries, Judge Edwards worked with Rotary International in efforts to provide permanent homes for street children in Latin America. Most notably, in Brazil he worked to persuade judges to consider placing homeless children with families instead of in institutions.

Two other California judges have received the William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence, which was created in 1996: Chief Justice Ronald M. George in 2002 and Judge Veronica McBeth of Los Angeles in 1998. In addition to this year's Rehnquist Award, Judge Edwards has received the 2004 Exemplary Community Leadership Award from the National Conference for Community and Justice, Silicon Valley Region, and the 2004 Distinguished Service Award from the National Center for State Courts.



Representatives from the California Highway Patrol demonstrate an automated ticketing device that is being piloted in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties. Photo: Courtesy of the Superior Court of Ventura County

Ventura Automates Traffic Citations

The Superior Court of Ventura County is working with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) on a pilot program that enables officers to generate automated traffic tickets using a handheld computer rather than write up traditional paper citations.

The handheld computers, distributed almost a year ago, are used by 19 of the 54 CHP officers in Ventura County. As of July 12, CHP officers had issued 1,756 automated citations, and a rollout of the project to all Ventura County officers is expected by the end of September.

"The project is going remarkably well," says Robert Steiner, manager of the Automation and Technology Unit of the Superior Court of Ventura County. "We can't wait until all of the citations come in via electronic interface."

The handheld device, called a Panasonic Toughbook, captures

information about a citation and forwards it electronically to the court, resulting in more accurate and efficient entry in the case management system. The Toughbook includes a magnetic strip that "reads" information from a driver's license, and it can capture a signature and thumbprint.

Following the initial pilot period in Ventura County, the project was expanded to Los Angeles County in July. By mid-July, eight CHP officers in the West Valley (Woodland Hills) office had been trained on the Toughbooks and had issued 385 automated citations.

The traffic project, funded by a grant from the state Office of Traffic Safety, is aimed at expanding the use of the handheld computers to all CHP officers throughout the state.

● For more information, contact Robert J. Steiner, Superior Court of Ventura County, 805-654-5035; e-mail: bob.steiner@mail.co.ventura.ca.us. ■

Same-Sex Marriage Decision Widely Read

During a seven-hour period on August 12, after the Supreme Court announced its decision on the legality of same-sex marriages performed in San Francisco, the opinion in *Lockyer v. San Francisco* was accessed more than 8,000 times on the court's Web site (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/supreme/). By way of comparison, the opinion filed that day in *Reeves v. Hanlon* (which involved whether a defendant may be held liable under an intentional interference theory for having induced an at-will employee to quit working for the plaintiff) was accessed 856 times during the same time period.

Law Students Test Appellate Skills



The Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six, invited the public to attend its third annual Moot Court Honors Competition on July 27 in Ventura. Students from three law schools—Ventura College of Law, Santa Barbara College of Law, and University of West Los Angeles School of Law—competed in the event.

Competitors argued cases similar to previous matters decided by the state Courts of Appeal, involving constitutional law and procedural issues in criminal law.

The winning students from each school (shown here with their law professors) presented oral arguments in front of Presiding Justice Arthur Gilbert (seated, middle) and Associate Justices Paul H. Coffee (seated, right) and Steven Z. Perren (seated, left).

A reception for the students, their families, and the law school deans and faculty followed in the court's library.

● For more information, contact Paul T. McGill, Assistant Administrator, Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six, 805-641-4711. Photo: Courtesy of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six

Recruiting Interpreters At the Airport



The Superior Court of Sacramento County is utilizing county information boards at the Sacramento International Airport to advertise opportunities to become a court interpreter. The court obtained permission from the county to post ads on the boards. The county uses the boards to showcase county news and upcoming events. Photo: Courtesy of the Superior Court of Sacramento County



Calendar

CONFERENCES

- OCT 21–23 National College on Judicial Conduct and Ethics, Chicago
- OCT 24–29 American Judges Association Annual Educational Conference, San Francisco
- DEC 8–10 Beyond the Bench XV, San Jose

JUDICIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- OCT 15 DEC 10
- Contact: Secretariat, 415-865-7640; e-mail: jcservices@jud.ca.gov. All Judicial Council business meetings will be held at the Administrative Office of the Courts in San Francisco unless otherwise noted. The council generally meets the day before business meetings for educational and executive sessions. When these sessions are open to the public, the council will note it on the meeting agenda, which is posted seven days before the business meeting at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/.

EDUCATION/TRAINING

CJER Programs

- OCT 22 ADA/Access Coordinators Training, Burbank
- OCT 25–27 Criminal Law Institute, Burlingame
- OCT 25–29 Continuing Judicial Studies Program, Burlingame
- OCT 27–29 Presiding Judge/Court Executive Officer Orientation and Court Management Program, Burlingame
- DEC 2 Complex Civil Litigation Workshop, Santa Ana

Court Managers and Supervisors Regional Training

- OCT 20–21 Improving Staff Performance, San Francisco
- NOV 4–5 Improving Staff Performance, Burbank
- NOV 17–18 Improving Staff Performance, Sacramento
- DEC 9–10 Improving Staff Performance, San Bernardino

Court Staff Regional Training

- OCT 15 Civil Appeals, Sacramento
- OCT 20 DMV Abstract Reporting, Traffic and Criminal, Sacramento
- NOV 9 DMV Abstract Reporting, Traffic and Criminal, San Francisco
- NOV 10 State Prison Abstracts, Sacramento
- NOV 19 Criminal Appeals, Burbank
- DEC 1 Juvenile Dependency/Delinquency, Sacramento
- DEC 3 Criminal Appeals, San Francisco

Qualifying Judicial Ethics Training, Second Cycle (QE2)

- OCT 14 Whittier
- OCT 21 Bakersfield
- OCT 22 Modesto
- NOV 4 Pomona
- NOV 10 San Francisco
- DEC 1 Santa Barbara

Orientation

- NOV 15–19 New Judge Orientation, San Francisco

Human Resources

- OCT 16 Court Interpreters: Oral Preparatory Workshop (Russian), Burbank

Family Dispute Resolution Training

- OCT 20 San Francisco
- OCT 28 Burbank
- OCT 29 Riverside
- NOV 5 Fresno
- DEC 3 Redding

News From the AOC

The Administrative Office of the Courts publishes several newsletters about aspects of court business. Visit these online on the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/ or on Serranus, the password-protected site of the state judicial branch, at <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/>. To subscribe to any of the newsletters, e-mail pubinfo@jud.ca.gov.

Capitol Connection

Monthly update on legislative issues affecting the judicial branch and information regarding the legislative process. Distributed monthly via e-mail. See www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/aoc/capconn.htm.

Court News

Award-winning bimonthly newsmagazine for court leaders, reporting on developments in court administration statewide. Indexed from 2000 at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtnews/.

HR Connect

Monthly update on human resources issues and programs in the state judicial branch. See http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/hr/hr_connect.htm.

Spread The News

Tell *Court News* about innovative programs and services at your court so that we can share your experience with your colleagues.

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Blaine Corren, *Court News*
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

Phone: 415-865-7449

Fax: 415-865-4334

E-mail: blaine.corren@jud.ca.gov

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*Chair, Judicial Council
Chief Justice*
Ronald M. George

*Administrative Director
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William C. Vickrey

Chief Deputy Director
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*Office of Communications
Manager/
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James Carroll

Managing Editor/Writer
Blaine Corren

Contributing Writers
Paula Bocciardi
Scott Burritt
Lynn Holton
Beth Shirk

Copy Editor
Mary Patton Nelson

Design and Production
Suzanne Bean
Sheila Ng

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Administrative Office of the Courts
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San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

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